

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01 SAJ-01

/059 W

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R 131220Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2765

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 2672

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PO

SUBJ: ARMY CHANGES

1. A MILITARY SOURCE DESCRIBED TO ARMA ON MAY 11 THE FOLLOWING

IMPORTANT CHANGES TAKING PLACE WITHIN THE ARMY:

(A) THE INVOLUNTARY RETIREMENT OF 35 CAVALRY OFFICERS CONSIDERED POLITICALLY UNRELIABLE BY THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL (RC).

INCLUDED ON THIS LIST ARE COL CARLOS JOSE MORGADO, MAJ JOSE BRUNO, MAJ NUNO BASTOS DE BIVAR, AND MAJ MANUEL SOARES MONJE, ALL OF WHOM ARE KNOWN AS ACTIVE MODERATES AND CURRENTLY IN PRISON UNDER SUSPICION OF HAVING PARTICIPATED IN THE MAR 11 COUP ATTEMPT. (B) THE DISBANDMENT OF THE 7TH CAVALRY

(ARMOR) REGIMENT AND THE MOVING OF ITS EQUIPMENT TO OTHER UNITS OF THE LISBON MILITARY REGION, INCLUDING LIGHT ARTILLERY REGIMENT (FORMERLY RAL-1 OF MAR 11 FAME) AND THE ENGINEER REGIMENT. THE 7TH CAV, LOCATED CLOSE TO THE PRESIDENT'S PALACE SERVED TO PROTECT THE PRESIDENT IN TIMES OF CONFIDENTIAL

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CRISES AND IS LINKED TO THE PRESIDENT THROUGH HIS MEMBERSHIP

IN THE TRADITIONALLY ELITE CAVALRY ARM. THE 7TH CAV HAS ALWAYS BEEN SUSPECT TO THE LEFTISTS IN THE AFM. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE LIGHT ARTILLERY AND ENGINEER REGTS ARE CONSIDERED LEFTIST AND RELIABLE BY THE AFM LEFTISTS. (C) MAJ HUGO MANUEL RODRIGUES DOS SANTOS IS TO BE APPOINTED AMBASSADOR TO ROMANIA. DOS SANTOS IS ONE OF THE ORIGINAL MEMBERS OF THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE OF THE AFM AND HAD BEEN A MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE BEFORE THAT BODY WAS ABOLISHED AND REPLACED BY THE RC. DOS SANTOS IS KNOWN AS A PRO-WEST MODERATE.

2. ARMA SOURCE ADDED THAT RETIREMENT ACTION IS CONTINUING IN THE OTHER ARMS AND THAT THE INFANTRY AND ARTILLERY WILL HAVE THE GREATEST NUMBER OF RETIREMENTS.

3. COMMENT: THESE MOVES ARE BAD NEWS FOR THE MODERATES WITHIN THE ARMY AND ARE ANOTHER SIGN OF THE GRADUAL WHITTLING AWAY OF THE INFLUENCE AND STRENGTH OF THOSE ARMY OFFICERS WHO MIGHT BE EXPECTED TO OPPOSE THE RADICALS WITHIN THE AFM.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY PERSONNEL, PERSONNEL SEPARATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975LISBON02672
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750168-0303
From: LISBON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750558/aaaacaff.tel
Line Count: 80
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19 MAY 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <20 MAY 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ARMY CHANGES
TAGS: MILI, PO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006